



# GREENSBORO URBAN AREA

## Metropolitan Planning Organization

### TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of September 18, 2002**  
**3:00 p.m. Greensboro, NC**  
**County Commissioners' Briefing Room (Blue Room)**  
**Old Guilford County Courthouse**

#### **TAC MEMBERS PRESENT**

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Sandy Carmany        | TAC Chair, Greensboro City Council     |
| Mayor Keith Holliday | Greensboro City Council                |
| Robbie Perkins       | Greensboro City Council                |
| Bob Landreth         | Guilford County Commission             |
| Mary Rakestraw       | Guilford County Commission             |
| Doug Galyon          | North Carolina Board of Transportation |

#### **ATTENDANCE**

|                  |                |              |                                |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Jim Westmoreland | TCC Chair/GDOT | Mike Cowan   | NCDOT – Div. 7                 |
| Tyler Meyer      | GDOT           | Cathy Houser | NCDOT – Design Services        |
| Craig McKinney   | GDOT           | Tom Martin   | Greensboro Planning Dept.      |
| Bill Marley      | FHWA           | Allen Purser | Greensboro Chamber of Commerce |
| Jeff Sovich      | GDOT           | Jim Ayers    | Mayor, Town of Pleasant Garden |
| Scott Rhine      | PART           |              |                                |

Sandy Carmany called the meeting to order at approximately 3:13 p.m.

#### **Action Items**

##### **1. Approval of Minutes of June 19, 2002**

Tyler Meyer requested a correction of the minutes. He asked that on page 3 of the minutes under Enhancements Grant Application for Greensboro to be changed from 50% local match to 80%. Bob Landreth moved for the approval of the June 19, 2002 minutes. Mayor Keith Holliday seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously in favor to approve the minutes as corrected.

## **2. Amend 2002 – 2008 MTIP Public Transportation Element**

Jeff Sovich advised this amendment would need to be deferred until the next meeting because required correspondence between Greensboro Transit Authority and the Federal Transit Administration had not been completed.

Jim Westmoreland thanked the NCDOT Public Transportation Division for their efforts in renewing Greensboro's fleet of buses. The funds would replace at least twenty buses and ten to twenty vans in the spring of next year.

### **Business Items**

#### **1. Bryan Boulevard Project Report**

Cathy Houser presented to the Committee a report on the Bryan Boulevard project. Years ago the airport hired a firm to begin final documentation and preliminary design on the airport study which included upgrading Bryan Boulevard. She described the two alternatives that were developed and, using a large map, explained the chosen alternative. There would be one interchange at Old Oak Ridge Road. At one point on Bryan Boulevard there would be a 70 feet median to accommodate future lanes. The project should be completed in the spring of 2006. Mayor Keith Holliday asked if there would be connections at the Old Oak Ridge Road intersection. She advised there would be a five-leg interchange at Old Oak Ridge Road and the interchange at Inman Road would be coming out. In a public hearing on August 1<sup>st</sup>, most of the comments from area residents concerned the expansion of Piedmont Triad International Airport and the Federal Express hub, rather than the Bryan Boulevard relocation. Efforts to coordinate with the airport are being made to address those concerns. Minutes from the hearing would be completed and distributed in approximately two weeks and the MPO would receive a copy of those minutes.

Jim Westmoreland asked if the alignment would be built to interstate standards. Cathy Houser advised that the project would be built to interstate standards due to the possibility of the future Interstate 73 coming through that area. Jim Westmoreland commented that there are several alternative alignments for the future I-73 being considered. The next meeting on that issue would be on November 14, 2002. Scott Rhine commented that a presentation on the Airport Area Transportation Study, showing the various I-73 alignments would be given at the October TAC meeting.

#### **2. Transportation Management Area Status**

Bill Marley explained that an Urbanized Area is designated as a TMA, when its population reaches 200,000 or more. Based on Census 2000 data, Greensboro's Urbanized Area population is 267,000. Various changes in the MPO's procedures would result from designation as a TMA. These changes include: 1) Greensboro's planning process would need to be certified every three years by officials of the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration; 2) Greensboro would need to develop a Congestion Management System within 18 months of the designation. The CMS would allow for more accurate traffic data collection and more efficient use of that data to alleviate traffic congestion. Greensboro has already taken steps that lay a foundation for a CMS; 3) Transit funds would be directly apportioned to Greensboro, allowing for greater local flexibility in programming; 4) Greensboro would receive STP Direct Attributable funds, which also increase local spending authority. NCDOT has drafted guidance for the distribution of STP-DA funds to TMAs, and will circulate this draft to the

TMA's in the fall; 5) Greensboro's Unified Planning Work Program will now require approval by the Federal Highway Administration; and 6) Greensboro's process for including public involvement in transportation planning will need to be documented and implemented.

Jim Westmoreland commented that with the new TMA status brings more reporting/recording responsibilities. The Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and USDOT look at larger urban areas a little more carefully as to how certain aspects of the transportation system are managed. Additional flexibility in funding would be available with the STP-DA funds, but with that additional flexibility, certain changes to funding sources are expected. Section 5307 transit funds would be received directly from the federal government and the allocation is slightly smaller and is limited to capital and planning purposes.

### **3. MPO Boundary, Structure and Governance Review**

Tyler Meyer advised that the MPO is established and regulated under federal law and has been in place since the 1973 Federal Highway Act. Each decennial census brings a review of the MPO's boundaries to identify and account for changes in population distribution. Likewise, TMA status brings a review of MPO structure and governance. Chapter 136, Article 16, Section 200.2 of North Carolina General Statutes (formerly known as House Bill 1288) echoes these requirements and adds state requirements on MPO reporting and on regional air quality strategies.

The Urbanized Area (UZA) boundary is determined by the Census Bureau and is based on a computer algorithm. The UZA population is the basis of STP-DA and PL fund distribution, while the UZA boundary is the dividing line between urban and rural functional classifications at the federal level. For the purposes of improving consistency in urban/rural designations and efficiency in distribution of federal highway funding, it is important for an MPO to adopt an adjusted UZA boundary. This adjusted boundary is used only in the assignment of federal highway funds and does not affect the overall funding levels or eligibility. An adjusted UZA boundary must, at a minimum, include the entire Census-designated UZA boundary.

The Metropolitan Area Boundary (MAB) delineates the MPO's planning area, and includes that area anticipated to become urban within twenty years. The MAB should be reviewed and adjusted as needed to reflect growth trends and relationships with contiguous MPOs. The only potential adjustments anticipated would be along the shared border with the High Point Urban Area MPO.

Following TMA designation, a review of the MPO's structure and governance is required. The fundamental concern that must be addressed by this review is whether operators of public transportation systems in the area are adequately represented on the TAC. General Statutes 136-16-200.2 suggests a somewhat broader review of the MPO structure to include representation of other government entities and relationships with planning partners.

NCGS 136-16-200.2 also establishes a reporting requirement. The MPO is to prepare a report of its findings by December 2002. The Statewide Planning Branch would incorporate a report to the Governor and Joint Transportation Oversight Committee. The implementation of the review is expected by mid-2003.

NCGS 136-16-200.2 further requires that all MPOs within a designated Air Quality Non-Attainment Area prepare a region-wide unified strategy for achieving conformity. The Regional Conformity Strategy is not a technical analysis or LRTP. The Strategy is to reflect that the MPO's long-range plans

and conformity efforts are coordinated. The Strategy must be developed within one year of the non-attainment designation, or the State will withhold matching funds, state highway funds and CMAQ funds. The goal of this requirement is for MPOs develop a reasonable process. The Triad MPOs and PART have already drafted a conformity strategy and currently have coordinated plans. A copy of this draft was submitted to the Division of Air Quality and the Statewide Planning Branch. This state level requirement involves only state funds and state actions and does not affect conformity status of MPOs.

The next step in this process would be to review the requirements further and present findings, points for discussion, and recommendations at an upcoming TAC meeting.

#### **4. STP-DA Funds**

Tyler Meyer advised that Surface Transportation Program Direct Attributable funds are federal highway funds received by the State and distributed to TMAs. North Carolina's annual apportionment of STP-DA funds is approximately \$20 million. The TMAs may direct STP-DA funds to state projects or local projects, however for local projects, local jurisdictions are typically responsible for supplying local matching funds and for satisfying project management requirements.

On August 29, 2001 the TAC passed a resolution to assume the authority for directing Greensboro's allocation of STP-DA funds. The resolution informed NCDOT of Greensboro's intent to direct these funds and initiated consultation with NCDOT, which is ongoing. NCDOT is currently developing a process for administering STP-DA funds among the state's 7 TMAs (three of which are newly designated), which will be finalized in the near future. Tentatively, the FY 2003 allocation for Greensboro is \$1.95 million, and future years' allocations may be larger.

Currently, the draft TIP spreads most of Greensboro's STP-DA funds among projects which were already existing, although the MPO could choose to reprogram its STP-DA allocation to other projects to better reflect local preferences. The options for directing our STP-DA funds currently being studied by staff include: using the entire allocation as shown in the draft TIP; reprogramming the entire allocation for other uses including state projects, incidental projects, and local projects; some combination of these two approaches; or keeping the first two years of STP-DA funds as they are currently shown, but programming funds for the remaining years of the '04-'10 TIP, and all future TIP cycles, according to local preferences. Staff will continue to review the draft TIP and STP-DA options. Results and recommendations will be presented at an upcoming meeting.

#### **5. Future Meeting Schedule**

Jeff Sovich advised the Committee that some members have encountered recurring scheduling conflicts that prevent them from attending the MPO meetings on the third Wednesday of the month. In order to better accommodate all members, it is advisable to consider changing the regular meeting date. The first alternative would be the second Thursday of each month; the second choice would be the fourth Wednesday of each month. The committee members were asked to review the calendar that was provided. The final meeting schedule is as follows: October 30, November 21, December 18, January 22, and February 26.

## **6. Planning Work Report**

Tyler Meyer informed the TAC that the draft 2004 to 2010 TIP is being developed and will continue to be developed over the fall. A public meeting will be held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Lake Mackintosh Marina from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m, during which NCDOT will receive comments on the draft TIP.

He also explained that due to acceleration of the eastern Urban Loop in the draft TIP, the MPO may be required to perform a conformity analysis, earlier than its next scheduled analysis. If such is the case, it will be advisable to update the socio-economic inputs used in the current regional travel model to reflect the results of Census 2000. Federal regulations require that conformity analyses incorporate the latest planning assumptions, but socio-economic data currently being used is not the most recent available..

Craig McKinney informed the TAC that a public meeting concerning the West Market Street widening project was held recently. No objections to this project were raised at the meeting. NCDOT plans to complete the environmental analysis for this project by the spring of 2003. Right-of-way acquisition will begin in 2007 and construction will start in 2009. There are four possible alternatives for this project: a 5 lane cross-section, with or without curb, gutter, and sidewalk, or a four lane divided cross-section with or without curb, gutter, and sidewalk. The MPO has indicated its preference for either of the two options having curb, gutter and sidewalk on both sides. Mayor Keith Holliday asked if any section of the road could be straightened out. Craig McKinney explained that although options for straightening had been discussed, the road would remain in its current alignment.

Tyler Meyer enumerated the projects and key dates listed in the MPO's long-range planning calendar and described the timeline for development of the draft TIP.

### **Other Items**

#### **1. NCDOT Update**

Doug Galyon reported that I-40 is scheduled to have three lanes open in each direction from Holden Road to Chimney Rock Road by November, and from Chimney Rock Road to Sandy Ridge Road by December. The Guilford College Bridge is now open. Holden Road southbound is open, but northbound is not open. The Chimney Rock Road interchange will not close until the Gallimore Dairy Road interchange opens on September 25<sup>th</sup>. Bell Road will be closed on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

The Board of Transportation has approved expanding the territory within which small urban area discretionary funds may be used, from a distance of one mile to two miles outside the boundary of urban municipalities or counties. The Board also approved an increase of funding from \$1 million per Board member to \$2 million, although the additional funding would need to be ratified by the general assembly.

The Secretary of Transportation recently announced the formation of the Transportation Enhancements Advisory Council, which will review applications for federal Transportation Enhancements grants. The central region will receive \$3.6 million for enhancement projects. Sandy Carmany clarified that the advisory council would make recommendations, while the BOT makes the final determination on what projects receive the funds.

Jim Westmoreland asked Doug Galyon about the legislation that was sent to the General Assembly related to expanding the range of project types eligible for use of highway trust fund money . Doug Galyon indicated that he feels that legislation would be passed. The Secretary, Governor, and Senate are in favor of the legislation. If the House approves the bill, the measure would most likely succeed.

## **2. Opportunity for remarks from Town Officials**

None.

## **3. Regional Update**

Scott Rhine advised that as of September 30<sup>th</sup> PART's regional bus service would be in operation throughout the Triad. The terminal site will be completed by November 21<sup>st</sup> and is located at Regional Road and I-40. A ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for November 22<sup>nd</sup> and information will be mailed to individuals on PART's mailing list, regarding the ceremony. Sandy Carmany commented that NCDOT has allowed PART to have a free lease of that site, which lies within the I-40 right-of-way. Mayor Keith Holliday suggested taking the TAC members on the bus to the ceremony site, on the day of the ceremony. Jim Westmoreland asked if the buses would be ADA compliant and if reduced fares would be available for persons with disabilities. Sandy Carmany replied that the buses are ADA compliant, and that the fare for persons with disabilities would be \$1.00 in lieu of the standard \$2.00 fare. She added that the PART Board also voted to extend the \$1.00 discount fare to students who display a school-issued ID.

Scott Rhine advised the Committee that PART Connections, which provides non-emergency medical transportation service, has been in operation since July 1<sup>st</sup>. There has been significant participation in this program by Baptist Hospital. There has been an average of 1,000 out-of-county trips per month since the service began. Mary Rakestraw asked that collection of such data be continued, and that it be made available to the public.

Scott Rhine also advised that public meetings regarding the Major Investment Study for the regional rail and bus rapid transit would be held on October 28, 29 and 30<sup>th</sup>. A public drop in session regarding the Airport Area Transportation Study will be held on November 14<sup>th</sup>.

## **4. Wrap-Up Items**

None.

The TAC adjourned at 4:52 p.m.